Information Link

A Source of Information for Our Customers

Customer Feedback Drives Improvements
Gary J. Vetter

In December 2005, the Information Technology Department's (ITD) Customer Services Division implemented a brief on-line Incident Management Survey that customers can submit following the resolution of their incidents. The impact of this survey has been remarkable!
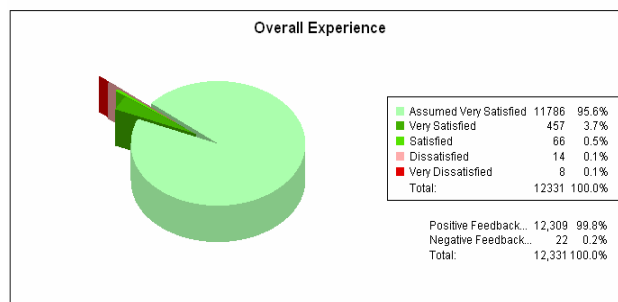
The obvious reason for most surveys is to assess the effectiveness of service. As a result, opportunities for improvement are typically identified. However, ITD recognizes that the real value of customer feedback is to drive lasting improvements in customer satisfaction. Ultimately, it is all about aligning IT with business requirements.

Customers are told about the survey process throughout the incident lifecycle. They are encouraged to "let us know how we are doing," and they are told that without their feedback, ITD can only assume they were "Very Satisfied" with the service and support they received.

Every survey is reviewed by the Customer Services Center Manager. Those with comments or negative ratings are acted upon in conjunction with the appropriate divisional manager. This approach has driven dozens of short-term and long-term improvements.

The "Survey Summary" graph reveals how customers have rated their "Overall Experience" with ITD. During the past six months, 12,331 incidents included surveys. Of those, 99.8% were handled positively! Only 22 surveys came back with an overall dissatisfied rating. Both types of feedback

are being used to enhance ITD's "customer-centric" spirit. We are listening; and we are changing for the better!

Our customers are the "heart of our business," and we will continue to hold ourselves accountable for a positive customer experience. So, please continue to participate in the Incident Management Survey process. "We appreciate and value your input!"

Work Management System Reporting with Database Views
Vern Welder

Many Information Technology Department (ITD) customers have expressed a need to create customized Work Management System (WMS) reports in order to manage the work they have requested from ITD. ITD has found that agency needs are very diverse, so it believes the most effective solution is for each agency to write their own WMS reports.

The WMS Oracle Database is the reporting data source. It consists of about 250 tables and is quite complex. Therefore, trained individuals are required to write reports using WMS data in its raw form.

ITD has been able to help several customers meet their WMS reporting needs by creating customized "views" of the WMS database. A database view organizes WMS data into a simple format that makes it easy to understand. Individuals trained to use a report writer can easily decipher the data within the view and create customized WMS reports. The view is secure; access is read-only and is restricted to individuals designated by the agency. The "raw" WMS database is more efficient than a view, but a view's ease-of-use outweighs efficiency for casual users.

The cost to create a view ranges from $900 to $2,000 depending on the agency's reporting needs. Most views ITD has created cost about $900. Costs consist of Systems Analyst time to determine the best design and Database Analyst time to create the view. There is no on-going cost for accessing the data. Customers who currently use views are happy with their ability to easily create the WMS information they need.

For more information on WMS Views, please contact the ITD Service Desk at (701) 328-4470. ITD will provide references upon request.

Geographic Information System (GIS) Professional Services Contract Pool
Pat Forster

Effective July 1, 2007, several categories of GIS professional services have been added to State Term Contract 095. This contract

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was originally established in 2005 to create a vendor pool for information technology professional services. The State's GIS Technical Committee, working in cooperation with the Information Technology Department (ITD) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) State Procurement Office, awarded contracts to GIS vendors in the following professional service categories:

* GIS Project Manager
* GIS Business Analyst
* GIS Programmer/Analyst
* GIS Analyst/Technician

* GIS Data Services Specialist
* GIS Web Designer
* GIS Training

Multiple vendors have been awarded contracts in each of the GIS Contract Pool categories. State agencies may use a structured work order request process to obtain GIS professional services through this contract. A primary benefit of using the contract is to make the procurement process more efficient by leveraging the master contract terms which have already been negotiated with the awarded vendors. It is also important to note that the creation of this vendor pool does not prevent agencies from selecting a vendor via the traditional RFP process.

For more information about the IT & GIS Professional Services Contract Pools and how to use the work order request process, please visit the State Contract 095 web site at: http://www.state.nd.us/csd/spo/contracts/html/095.htm.

On The Job For ITD

Darrin Lee, a Network Business Consulting Manager with the Information Technology Department's (ITD) Telecommunications Division, leads a team of business consultants who provide network consulting, network design and engineering, and project management services to state government, higher education, K-12, public safety, and cities/counties/local government (PSD).

Darrin, who has been with ITD for five years, diligently works toward providing value and personalized service to ITD's clients and partners. "Our team helps connect client business needs with technology solutions," he explained. "It is exciting to continually learn new technologies and how they might help our customers and partners."

A milestone in Darrin's career was managing a project to enhance the connectivity to ITD's clients in eastern North Dakota. This project brought a gigabit ethernet fiber optic network backbone to Fargo to provide better connectivity for ITD's network clients and partners, including higher education, the City of Fargo, Cass County, and state government. This project allowed clients to leverage the ability to do interactive video and deploy bandwidth-intensive applications.

Darrin has a B.A. in Political Science and Public Administration.

Reading and biking are among Darrin's hobbies, and he also has an FAA-certified private pilot's license.

Shared Web Services

Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) design techniques allow organizations to implement shared services that are easy to discover, consume, and reuse by multiple applications. A service encapsulates business logic and IT functionality from applications utilizing the service. The Information Technology Department (ITD) has developed several shared web services that are available for agencies to use within their applications:

Shared Services	Business Functionality Provided
Credit Card	Accept credit cards as a payment method using real-time credit card authorization
Authentication/Authorization	Perform security functions against the State's Microsoft Active Diretory or IBM SecureWay (State of ND Login ID) servers, including authentication, authorizations, and account inquiry
FileNet	Add, delete, and search documents
Address Validation	Perform mailing address validation using the State's postal service validation software (Finalist)
Bank Routing Number Validation	Perform bank routing number validation

If you are interested in using any of these shared services within your applications or you have services that could be shared, contact Kyle Forster via kforster@nd.gov or calling (701) 328-4323 or Eli Cornell via email ecornell@nd.gov or calling (701) 328-2451.